

REMARKS

Reconsideration of this application as amended is respectfully requested. Claims 1 – 69 and 71 are pending in this application. Claims 24 and 48 have been cancelled. Claims 1, 26, and 50 are have been amended. Claims 1, 26, and 50 are independent. The remaining claims depend, directly or indirectly, from claims 1, 26, or 50.

Claims Rejection – 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

The Examiner has rejected the claims under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being anticipated by Palmberg, in view of Keshevan or Hedlund, Skidmore in view of Keshevan or Hedlund, and Isakov, in view of Keshevan or Hedlund. Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

Applicants have amended Claims 1, 26, and 50 to include the limitations that the second inserts *generally penetrate the formation shallower than the first inserts during drilling*. Applicants submit that these claims as amended are not disclosed in any of the cited references, individually, or in combination with other references.

Claims 1, 26, and 50 are distinguishable over, Palmberg, Isakov, or Skidmore in view of Keshevan or Hedlund. at least because each claim requires that each of the second inserts have a second exposed portion with a second profile that is appreciably different from the first profile of the first inserts' exposed portions "such that the second inserts generally penetrate the formation shallower than the first inserts during drilling." None of these combinations teach the claimed invention. Palmberg, Isakov, Skidmore, Keshevan and Hedlund are completely silent as to this feature. Thus, claims 1, 26, and 50 as amended are patentable over Palmberg in view of Keshevan or Hedlund, Isakov in view of Keshevan or Hedlund, and Skidmore in view of Keshevan or Hedlund. Claims 2-25, 27-49, 51-69, and 71 are dependent on claims 1, 26, and 50. These dependant claims are allowable for at least the same reasons. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

During the course of these remarks, Applicant has at times referred to particular limitations of the claims that are not shown in the applied prior art. This short hand approach to discussing the claims should not be construed to mean that the other claimed limitations are not part of the claimed invention. They are as required by law. Consequently, when interpreting claims, each of the claims should be construed as a whole, and patentability determined in light of this required claim construction. The amendments to the claims have been made without prejudice to the Applicants pursuing broader claims in a continuing application.

Reconsideration of the claims and the allowance thereof is respectively requested. Applicants respectfully suggest that the application has been placed in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner have any questions regarding the foregoing, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,



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